

What is claimed is:

1. An in-store product information retrieval system having a portable user terminal, a wireless apparatus provided for each product displayed within a store and communicating with said portable user terminal, a store computer provided in said store and a network connecting said wireless apparatus with said store computer comprising:

10 a means for making a request for retrieval of product information from said portable user terminal when said portable user terminal approaches to within a prescribed distance of a wireless apparatus corresponding to a product for which retrieval of product information is desired;

15 a means for sending from said wireless apparatus to said store computer said request received from said portable user terminal by adding an identification number of said wireless apparatus;

20 a database provided in said store computer and storing product information;

a retrieval means, provided in said store computer, for performing retrieval of product information stored in said database based on said identification number of said wireless apparatus received from said wireless apparatus;

25 a sending means, provided in said store computer, for sending retrieval results to said wireless apparatus with said identification number; and

a receiving means, provided in said portable user terminal, for receiving retrieval results from said

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wireless apparatus.

2. The in-store product information retrieval system according to claim 1, wherein a plurality of said wireless apparatuses are provided in said store and said wireless apparatuses are disposed at regular intervals.

3. The in-store product information retrieval system according to claim 1, wherein said database comprising an identification number of said wireless apparatus and product information corresponding to said identification number of said wireless apparatus.

4. An in-store product information retrieval system comprising: a portable user terminal, a wireless apparatus provided for each product displayed within a store and communicating with said portable user terminal, a transmitter provided in said wireless apparatus, a memory, provided in said wireless apparatus, for storing store information of said store, a store computer provided in said store, and a network connecting said wireless apparatus with said store computer, said system further comprising:

a means for making a request for retrieval of store information from said portable user terminal to said wireless apparatus;

a transferring means, provided in said wireless apparatus, for transferring said request received from said portable user terminal to said store computer;

a retrieval means, provided in said store computer, for performing retrieval of a wireless apparatus that stores store information in a memory thereof, based on

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said request received from said portable user terminal;

an instruction means, provided in said store computer, for instructing a wireless apparatus obtained by said retrieval to transmit store information stored in  
5 said wireless apparatus to said portable user terminal;

a transmitting means for transmitting said store information stored in said wireless apparatus to said portable user terminal, based on said instruction of said store computer; and

10 a receiving means, provided in said portable user terminal, for receiving said store information from said wireless apparatus.

5. The in-store product information retrieval system according to claim 4, wherein said wireless  
15 apparatus communicates with said portable user terminal by a first output power of said transmitter, when receiving said request for retrieval from said portable user terminal, and said wireless apparatus communicates with said portable user terminal by a second output power  
20 that is different from said first output power, when transmitting said store information from said wireless apparatus to said portable user terminal.

6. The in-store product information retrieval system according to claim 4, wherein said wireless  
25 apparatus communicates with said portable user terminal by a prescribed output power of said transmitter, when receiving said request for retrieval from said portable user terminal, and said wireless apparatus communicates with said portable user terminal by a power that is equal

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to said output power, when transmitting said store information from said wireless apparatus to said portable user terminal.

7. A retrieval method in an in-store product information retrieval system having a portable user terminal, a wireless apparatus provided for each product displayed within a store and communicating with said portable user terminal, a store computer provided in said store, a database provided in said store computer and storing product information, and a network connecting said wireless apparatus with said store computer, said method comprising the steps of:

making a request for retrieval of product information from said portable user terminal when said portable user terminal approaches to within a prescribed distance of a wireless apparatus corresponding to a product for which retrieval of product information is desired;

sending from said wireless apparatus to said store computer said request received from said portable user terminal by adding an identification number of said wireless apparatus;

performing retrieval of product information stored in said database based on said identification number of said wireless apparatus received from said wireless apparatus;

sending retrieval results to said wireless apparatus with said identification number; and

receiving retrieval results from said wireless

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apparatus.

8. A retrieval method in an in-store product information retrieval system comprising a portable user terminal, a wireless apparatus provided for each product  
5 displayed within a store and communicating with said portable user terminal, a transmitter provided in said wireless apparatus, a memory, provided in said wireless apparatus, for storing store information of said store, a store computer provided in said store, and a network  
10 connecting said wireless apparatus with said store computer, said method comprising the steps of:

making a request for retrieval of store information from said portable user terminal to said wireless apparatus,

15 transferring said request received from said portable user terminal to said store computer;

performing retrieval of a wireless apparatus that stores store information in a memory thereof, based on said request received from said portable user terminal;

20 instructing a wireless apparatus obtained by said retrieval to transmit store information stored in said wireless apparatus to said portable user terminal;

transmitting said store information stored in said wireless apparatus to said portable user terminal, based  
25 on said instruction of said store computer; and

receiving said store information from said wireless apparatus.

9. The retrieval method according to claim 8, wherein said wireless apparatus communicates with said

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portable user terminal by a first output power of said transmitter, when receiving said request for retrieval from said portable user terminal, and said wireless apparatus communicates with said portable user terminal  
5 by a second output power that is different from said first output power, when transmitting said store information from said wireless apparatus to said portable user terminal.

10. The retrieval method according to claim 8,  
10 wherein said wireless apparatus communicates with said portable user terminal by a prescribed output power of said transmitter, when receiving said request for retrieval from said portable user terminal, and said wireless apparatus communicates with said portable user  
15 terminal by a power that is equal to said output power, when transmitting said store information from said wireless apparatus to said portable user terminal.

FOOTNOTES